

Director, Central Intelligence

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Assistant Director, Current Intelligence

The Korean Truce Talks

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1. Since their beginning in July 1951, the Korean truce talks have made sporadic progress toward a successful conclusion. Despite the recent prediction of Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Zorin of a successful conclusion of the talks, the Communists continue a rabid propaganda campaign centered on the theme of UN bacteriological warfare, atrocities, and air violations.

2. Furthermore, the Communist negotiators maintain an apparently adamant stand on a number of points whose solution would necessitate a major change in their attitude.

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3. The five items on the Korean armistice negotiation agenda are:

- (1) adoption of an agenda;
- (2) establishment of a demarcation line between both sides in order to establish a demilitarized zone;
- (3) concrete arrangements for the realization of a cease-fire and an armistice in Korea, including the composition, authority and functions of a supervisory organization to carry out the terms of a cease-fire and an armistice;
- (4) arrangements relating to the exchange of prisoners of war; and
- (5) recommendations to all governments concerned.

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4. Agreement has been reached on the first item. Agreement in principle has been reached on the second item, but there will be a new determination of the actual line of contact immediately prior to the signing of an armistice. Item five has resulted in agreement on a statement recommending that a political conference of both sides be held within three months after the armistice is

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signed, but its final settlement is in abeyance pending a meeting of staff officers to discuss mechanical details for incorporating the agreed text into the armistice agreement.

5. Items three and four of the agenda have provided the major source of disagreement. Principal points of dissension on item three have been the question of airfield construction and the composition of the supervisory body. The Communists demand that the USSR be a member of the supervising body and the United Nations firmly opposes its inclusion. The UN has maintained that certain existing airfields might be repaired, but not improved, and that no new airfields should be constructed; the Communists consider this a violation of their sovereignty and have held out for unlimited construction. Communist insistence on this point may be explained by indications that the North Koreans have a growing air force, although aircraft in North Korea are disassembled or widely dispersed.

6. Other divisive issues still remaining under item three are the number of ports of entry to be observed by the cease-fire body, restrictions on naval activity, and various problems concerning the operations of the cease-fire observation teams. There is no information on Communist intentions in regard to these latter points.

7. Item four has been equally difficult. Among over 100,000 UN-held Communist prisoners 17,000 reportedly have indicated unwillingness to return to the Communists, but Communist negotiators will not accede to the principle of voluntary repatriation. Another major stumbling block has been the actual numbers of prisoners held by the opposing sides. The UN has removed from its POW lists the names of some 40,000 South Koreans who were impressed into the Communist army and later captured, and the Communists have demanded an accounting of this group.

8. Of more serious import, the Communists have listed somewhat over 10,000 United Nations prisoners while the UN's missing-in-action figures stand at over 100,000. Although over 11,000 Americans are listed as missing in action, the Communists have reported only 3,000 as prisoners of war. The largest category of prisoners unaccounted for in Communist hands are former South Korean soldiers who have been reindoctrinated and impressed into the North Korean Army.

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9. The Communists' hard bargaining position is undoubtedly buttressed by the considerable build-up in their armed forces in the area achieved during the talks. Personnel strength has increased from about 500,000 to 880,000. Enemy armor, artillery and general logistic capabilities have made great progress. Available enemy aircraft during this period have increased from 1,000 including 400 jets, to about 1,700, including 900 jets.

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